

Inclusion STRATEGIES

Classroom practices that help create educational opportunities for every child



by Peggy Hammeken

Inclusion is the best response to the idea that, to the maximum extent possible, students with disabilities are to be educated with their non-disabled peers in the general education classroom. This strategy card will help you expand your teaching to include the broadest range of learners.

Differentiating Instruction

The intent of differentiated instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is and teaching from that point. The underlying view of differentiated instruction is that "one size does not fit all"—an idea counter to an assumption in many classrooms.

- Use these questions to help you plan:
 - What do students need to know?
 - How will they learn it? Each student has his or her own learning style and preferences. The more you can broaden your spectrum of teaching methods, the more students will be included in learning.
 - How will students demonstrate that they have learned it? Assessments should match students' learning styles and the ways they express their learning.
- Create lesson plans with various activities based on Gardner's Multiple Intelligences or Bloom's Taxonomy. By addressing different types of intelligences and abilities, you provide special-needs students more opportunities to participate, learn and succeed.

Teaching Writing

- Students who are unable to write may draw pictures or copy sentences.
- Keep a box of old photographs, pictures from magazines and animal or nature pictures in the classroom. Ask students to select pictures and list words that describe the pictures.
- Allow the student to dictate a story to an adult. The student can practice reading the story and tracing the letters of individual words.
- Special paper helps some students in their writing. Examples include paper with raised lines, paper with multicolored lines and paper in different widths.
- Use multisensory materials to develop fine motor coordination. Students can create numbers and letters with clay, sand trays, pudding, shaving cream, tracers and templates. Some students will need assistance and adult prompts.
- Provide "story starters" for students. Discuss various types of sentences that could be used as story starters, and ask each student to provide one. Write each on a Popsicle stick or tongue depressor, and place the sticks in a decorated "Story Starter" can.



TIP: Create three cans: "Story Starters," "Detail Sentences," and "Ending Sentences." Advanced students can select more than one stick—this increases the level of difficulty.

- Create "word banks." Ask the student to select a familiar or favorite topic. Generate a topic word list and allow the students to write about the topic for several days using the words from the bank.

TIP: assemble a small group to work together. Allow students to brainstorm for three to five minutes using the words in the bank. Then, the group develops a story and students help each other with structure, grammar, spelling, etc.

- Allow peers to write a story together. This allows students to share ideas and helps those with difficulty in writing see how others approach the task.

Lecturing

When you deliver information by lecture, remember that many students have difficulty processing the spoken word. These strategies will help make your lectures more effective.



- **Limit lectures to no more of 30% of your delivery methods.** Remember—the majority of your students are likely visual learners.
- **Support your lectures with supplementary materials,** such as visual aids, diagrams, and demonstrations.
- **Give students enough time to process the information.** Too much information can overwhelm some learners.

TIP: Create lectures of "bite-sized" chunks of information; allow processing time before moving on to other types of instructional delivery.

- **Use "wait time."** If students are required to respond, allow a minimum wait time of 10 seconds for students. This allows all students to process your questions and their responses. Do not allow students to raise their hands until you provide a signal to do so.
- **Give students time to copy notes** and other material from the board or projection screen. For those unable to write, provide an outline of the key points for them to follow.
- **Simplify the vocabulary** if you require students to take notes.
- **Highlight key words,** phrases, terms and concepts when material is presented visually.

Teaching Spelling



- **Set individual spelling goals.** When a student consistently fails spelling tests, revise the goal. A realistic goal may be to master half the list. When that modified goal is reached, slowly increase the number.
- **Use index cards to monitor spelling.** For each student who needs special help:
 - Write the words "Words I Know" on one index card and "Spelling Words" on another—these cards will identify two stacks of index cards.
 - Next, write the student's spellings words on index cards, one word per card. Ask the student to spell the words orally.
 - If the student spells the word correctly, place a tally mark on the back of the index card.
 - When the student spells the word three times correctly and sequentially, the word is moved into the "Words I Know" stack.
 - Review the words in the "Words I Know" stack periodically; if a student has not retained spelling of a word, that word goes back into the "Spelling Words" stack.
- **Use a Word List Chart to monitor spelling.** This chart has a column for the spelling words on the left, a column for the date, five columns—labeled #1, #2, #3, #4 and #5—for recording the results of spelling attempts (check, smiley face, etc.) and a column for "Mastery." The student is tested orally each week. If the student spells the word correctly, place a mark in the test columns; otherwise, leave the box blank. Once the student has mastered the word on three consecutive tries, mark the Mastery column with a "yes" and remove the word from the list. Words not mastered are added to the list for the following week along with new words.
- **Group spelling words into word families.** This allows phonetic learners to focus on word patterns. When the student understands a word family, such as at, hat, pat, rat, change the vowel: hot, pot, rot.
- **Teach difficult word patterns together,** such as "ie" words: believe, relieve, achieve. Have students make flash cards and write the "hard part" in a different color: believe.

Giving Directions

Good directions—both oral and written—are essential to be sure that students at all levels can process those directions and understand what to do.

► Oral Directions

- If you sense that students are having trouble with particular oral directions, write them out so that students can refer to them as needed.
- Do not interject irrelevant or superfluous information into your directions. Keep directions concise and simple.
- Use visuals when you can.

TIP: Ask the student to repeat back the directions if you suspect the student does not understand.

► Written Directions

- Write directions in sequential steps.
- Ask the students to read the directions from start to finish at least twice before asking for help.
- When written directions are lengthy, have the students place a colored dot between each segment of the directions. This will help the students find the steps.

Facilitating Note Taking

Taking notes is not simple—it requires an analysis of information coming in and then outputting the information in written form. These strategies will help your students be better note takers.



- Putting a date on class notes will help organize them.
- Paper from loose-leaf binders tends to get lost. Have your students use a spiral- or wire-bound notebook.
- Use cues to alert students to note-taking opportunities, such as: "Please remember this," "this point is important," and "Write this down."
- Put an outline of the main topics on the board. Students can copy the main ideas and then list details during the lesson.
- Use an Outline Form for four main topics and four supporting details for each. You can use this form for Partial Outline activities, where you supply some of the outline and the students complete the outline. You can also do this activity with a spider diagram or concept map.

I.	_____
A.	_____
B.	_____
C.	_____
D.	_____
II.	_____
A.	_____
B.	_____
C.	_____
D.	_____
etc.	

Helping Students Stay Organized

Many students need help in making sense of all that they are learning and organizing it so that information is accessible. You can help your students with these strategies:

- Color-code folders for each subject. If possible, provide each student with a set of colored folders. Assign colors to each subject. When it's time for math or reading, all students will be retrieving the same color folder.

TIP: For students who have trouble with folders, use a three-ring binder with a plastic supply pouch inside.

- Lockers can be organized with two piles (folders, books, etc.): one for morning and one for afternoon.
- Have students use an assignment book or sheet.
- When assigning homework or projects, tell the students how long the work should take. This will help students prioritize work and start on major projects early on. Break complex projects into steps and provide estimates on time for each.
- Create a simple daily checklist with assignment and reminders. This can be taped to the desktop or placed into a notebook.